

ANNFIELD PLAIN
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.



MEDICAL OFFICER'S
ANNUAL REPORT

FOR 1899.

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MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT For 1899.

Stanley, February 2nd, 1900.

GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honour of presenting you with my report for the year 1899. The number of cases of Sickness from notifiable diseases reported to me during the past year amounted to 188, and this number was made up of the following, viz :—Scarlatina 160, Enteric Fever 8, Diphtheria 3, and Erysipelas 17. The non-notifiable infectious diseases brought under my notice were 60 cases of Measles, 10 of Whooping Cough, and 40 of Diarrhœa. Scarlatina was present at the end of 1898. It began to spread and steadily increased, becoming very prevalent during the next four months. It then considerably abated but continued more or less throughout the year. Its distribution was not confined to any particular village, nor did the outbreak assume the form of an active epidemic. There is no means of stamping out Scarlatina except by complete isolation and that can only be obtained by removal to a hospital, and it seems unfortunate that the means of isolation being provided is not more frequently resorted to. The chief factor in propogating Scarlatina is due to the prolonged convalescent stage when the infection is still present and the patient practically well and mixing with the healthy. Little benefit seems to be derived from the use of disinfectants, although the best known for personal application are provided in all cases gratis.

ENTERIC OR TYPHOID FEVER.—As already stated eight cases of this fever were notified being six less than the previous year. The first occurred in January and the last in December, at intervals of not less than a month between each case. Five resided in the village of Dipton, two in Annfield Plain, and one in East Pontop. Outbreaks of Typhoid Fever are usually attributed to local insanitary conditions, but nothing in the surroundings seemed likely to have originated the disease, neither had there been any communication to convey infection. It may however be stated that the majority of the above occurred in what might be termed Typhoid localities, *i.e.* places where year after year one or more cases appear, although all extraneous causes supposed to produce or retain the germs had been removed. Not all the cases were Typical Typhoid. Disinfectants for pail use were always supplied.

DIPHTHERIA.—One case occurred in February and two in December. The latter were members of the same family and were attacked simultaneously. The disease being acutely infectious, it seems rather remarkable that no subsequent case attended either outbreak. An early visit after notification presented no typical symptoms.

ERYSIPELAS is rather prevalent in mining districts, partly due to the numerous accidents happening. Direct infection was absent in every instance.

MEASLES.—A case of Measles imported into the village of Dipton caused a smart epidemic, lasting about two months. The area covered was limited to the village and its vicinity.

WHOOPIING COUGH.—It was only by enquiry after death, that the few cases of Whooping Cough came under notice.

DIARRHŒA.—Infantile Diarrhœa as a zymotic disease was not more prevalent than in several previous years, but Gastro-Enteritis, a disease closely allied, was fatally prevalent in the months of August and September.

The predisposing causes of this seasonable disease are said to be the same as exists in Typhoid Fever, and the exciting cause a micro organism aroused into activity by a high temperature.

The climate in August and September was undoubtedly responsible for the outbreak, but enquiry showed that the disease was fairly equally distributed over the district, irrespective of its sanitary condition.

It is regrettable that only two patients were induced to accept the benefits of the Isolation Hospital. Their easy removal and excellent treatment are likely however to make the Hospital more popular.

The New Vaccination Act as regards claiming exemption has been a marked success ; not many have made application, and the number appears to be decreasing. The operation itself is however not efficiently performed by private practitioners.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The number of births registered during the year amounted to 442 giving a birth-rate of 32·74, and the number of deaths—including those occurring in the Workhouse—was 202, giving a death rate of 15 per 1000, estimating the population at 13500. The births were 33 below and the deaths equal to the previous year. Deaths from all forms of infectious diseases were as follows, viz : Scarlatina 6, Enteric Fever 4, Measles 2, Whooping Cough 2, and Diarrhœa 7 ; total 21, being 10·5 per cent of the whole deaths. The mortality from Scarlatina was light, and that of Enteric Fever higher than usual. Infantile mortality was rather high, those succumbing under the age of one year exceeding a third, and by the addition of those between one and five years, the result showed that half the deaths took place under five years of age. Notifiable diseases made practically little difference in the infantile death-rate, but Diarrhœa and Gastro-Enteritis materially assisted in the increase.

The following table gives the Vital Statistics for the County of Durham and for the Urban District :—

County of Durham. Annfield Plain District.					
Estimated Population	...	808,417	...	13500	
Birth-rate	... ..	35	...	32·74	per 1000.
Death-rate	... ..	18·8	...	15	"
Zymotic death-rate	.. ...	2·35	...	1·55	"
Infantile Mortality (rate per 1000 births)		179	...	169·68	"
Scarlet Fever	... ..	0·21	...	0·44	"
Fever Enteric &c.	... ..	0·29	...	0·3	"
Measles	... ..	0·50	...	0·15	"
Whooping Cough	... ..	0·37	...	0·15	"
Diarrhœa	... ..	0·99	...	0·52	"
Enteritis &c.	... ..	1·05	...	0·6	"
Phthisis death-rate	... ..	1·14	...	0·15	"
Respiratory Diseases	... ..	3·33	...	2·8	"

The population is estimated at the end of June 1899, and was probably over estimated the previous year.

INSPECTOR'S DEPARTMENT.

Sixty houses were built and occupied during the past year, forty-one were self-contained and the remaining nineteen consisted of double tenements. Regarding improvements to old premises, 115 notices were served to abate nuisances, improve the drainage and remedy all structural defects. A large majority have been attended to satisfactorily, and the remainder are in progress. One defective house was permanently closed. Under the "Housing of the Working Classes Act," eleven houses were dealt with and put into habitable condition. Pit-fall have caused the collapse of two houses situated in Pontop Rows, and the shrinkage of several others. The owners are giving them due attention.

OUT-OFFICES.—All the out-offices attached to the Loud Cottages were condemned as insanitary and offensive, have been replaced by new erections. In several isolated cases also, the changes that have been made, either by alterations or partial reconstruction, were for the purpose of doing away with the objectionable open privy-middens.

There still remain a number of objectionable out-offices notably at Kyo, Woodhouses, South Medomsley and Pontop Rows.

SEWERS.—A new Sewer was laid to South Medomsley Cottages to replace the open channels, but the connections to all the houses are not yet completed. A Sewer from the Woodhouses to join Flinthill would practically complete the drainage of the district.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.—The sewage disposal works at Kyo that deal with a large portion of the district having turned out a complete failure are undergoing remodelling by the substitution of bacteriological filters, on the Sutton plan, in lieu of the present chemical precipitation process. If the material to be used, and the construction of the works are carried out on the lines followed at South Moor in the adjoining district, a successful result will be assured.

It is also intended to adopt the Kyo system in the treatment of the sewage at the Dipton out-fall works; the present method being absolutely useless. The sewage from South Medomsley will be treated by irrigation as soon as land suitable for the purpose can be procured.

REMOVAL OF REFUSE.—Since March 1st, the removal of refuse has been done by contractors under the direct control of

the Council, and under the supervision of the Inspector. There is a marked improvement over the previous method, and no grounds for the least complaint in carrying out the work.

WATER SUPPLY.—The water supply to the whole district is both good and abundant, and where it is not directly applied to each house, is within easy distance. During the year it was laid to 178 houses. The Square in Dipton, East Pontop and South Medomsley are awaiting their turn, besides a few detached houses.

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES have been registered and regulations for their control are to be adopted shortly. The premises used by farmers are all that need be desired, there are others however that will be called upon for improvements.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES are clean and in every respect satisfactory. One has been built and licensed, and another is in the course of erection to replace one condemned.

LODGING HOUSES were visited regularly, and little was found to complain of in their condition. No prosecution was necessary under the "Food and Drugs Act."

WORK being plentiful, there is a constant demand for workmen, and as a consequence, overcrowding is very prevalent. The only remedy likely to have any effect, is to take proceedings where the air space is less per person than the law allows, or where the sanitary requirements are deficient. Single-roomed houses connected with collieries are easily come at, and the owners have met the moral difficulty by placing tenants having the least numbers and youngest children. The same cannot be said of all owners of single-roomed tenemented property, nor of occupiers who sub-let a room. Two families living together is another form of overcrowding not uncommon.

There are no special trades, manufactories, nor any kind of work effecting the general health of this district.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

T. BENSON,

Medical Officer.

THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,
ANNFIELD PLAIN.

A. TABLE OF DEATHS DURING THE YEAR 1899, IN THE ANNFIELD PLAIN URBAN DISTRICT,

Classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

MORTALITY FROM ALL CAUSES, AT SUBJOINED AGES.						MORTALITY FROM SUBJOINED CAUSES, DISTINGUISHING DEATHS OF CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE.																										
At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	FEVERS.		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
							Smallpox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal.	Cholera.	Erisipelas.	Measles.	Whooping Cough.	Diarrhoea and Dysentery.	Rheumatic Fever.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy.	Heart Disease.	Influenza.	Injuries.	All other Diseases.	TOTAL.				
202	75	28	11	8	50	30	Under 5	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	7	...	...	26	1	...	1	60	103
							5 Upwards	1	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	..	..	2	13	9	5	10	54	99
The subjoined numbers have also to be taken into account in judging of the above records of mortality.																																
Deaths occurring outside the district among persons belonging thereto.																									2	3	1	4				

Area and Population of the District to which this return relates. — Area in Acres, 3475 ; Population last Census, 9837 ;
Population (estimated to middle of 1899), 13500.
Death Rates. — General, 15 per 1,000, Population estimated to middle of 1899 ; Infant (under 1 year of age), 169·68 per 1,000
Births Registered.
T. BENSON, Medical Officer of Health.
February 5th, 1900.

B. TABLE OF POPULATION, BIRTHS. AND OF NEW CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS,

Coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year 1899, in the Annfield Plain Urban District; classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

POPULATION AT ALL AGES.			REGISTERED BIRTHS.	AGED UNDER 5 OR OVER 5.	NEW CASES OF SICKNESS COMING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.													NUMBER OF SUCH CASES REMOVED FROM THEIR HOMES FOR TREATMENT IN ISOLATION HOSPITAL.																	
Last Census.	Estimated to middle of 1899.	Under 5 ...			5 upwards	1	2	3	4	FEVERS.				5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
						Smallpox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal	Cholera.	Erysipelas.	Smallpox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal	Cholera.	Erysipelas.								
9837	13500	442		85	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
				75	2	...	...	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

“ Notification of Infectious Disease ” has been compulsory in the District since February, 1897.

The Isolation Hospital used by the Sick of this District is situated at Leadgate.

